

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of providing photofinishing services, comprising the steps of:

- a) supplying a memory device for a digital camera to a photographer;
- b) the photographer taking and storing a plurality of digital images on the memory device;
- c) the photographer delivering the memory device containing the digital images to a photofinisher;
- d) the photofinisher producing prints of the digital images and returning the prints to the photographer; and
- e) the photofinisher erasing the digital images from the memory device and supplying the memory device to another photographer to repeat steps b) through e).

2. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of the photofinisher producing an index print and/or CD of the digital images from the memory device and returning the index print and/or CD to the photographer.

3. The method claimed in claim 2, wherein the memory device is capable of holding a number N of digital images and the photofinisher produces prints for only the first M images, where M is less than N, but the index print and/or the CD contain all N of the digital images on the memory device.

4. The method claimed in claim 3, wherein the index print and/or the CD contain all N of the digital images on the memory device and indicates which images have or have not been printed.

5. The method claimed in claim 4, wherein the index print and/or the CD contain instructions for obtaining prints of the unprinted images.

6. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device is adapted for use with a particular camera model, and further comprising the step of offering a number of different memory devices for different camera models.

7. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device is a CF, MMC, SD, xD, or Memory Stick.

8. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device bears a code that indicates to the photofinisher that the memory device carries with it the commitment to create prints.

9. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device bears a graphic that indicates that the card carries with it the commitment to create prints.

10. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device is returned with less than a predefined number of image files, and including the step of providing a credit to the photographer.

11. The method claimed in claim 10, wherein the credit is in the form of a coupon.

12. The method claimed in claim 10, wherein the credit is in the form of a debit card that is returned with the prints.

13. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein a debit card for photofinishing services is supplied to the photographer along with the memory device and the debit card is presented to the photofinisher along with the memory device.

14. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device includes a protected memory area that is accessible by a supplier and the photofinisher, but not by the photographer.

15. The method claimed in claim 14, wherein the protected memory area contains a unique ID.

16. The method claimed in claim 14, wherein the protected memory area contains a number indicating the number of times that the memory device has been recycled.

17. The method claimed in claim 14, wherein the protected memory area contains instructions for the photofinisher provided by the supplier.

18. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of supplying a claim card for retrieving photofinishing services to the photographer along with the memory device and presenting the claim card to the photofinisher to retrieve the photofinishing order.

19. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of supplying a removable tag for retrieving photofinishing services to the photographer along with the memory device and presenting the removable tag to the photofinisher to retrieve the photofinishing order.

20. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of writing an identifier unique to the photographer on the memory device and presenting the identifier unique to the photographer to the photofinisher to retrieve the photofinishing order.

21. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of writing a phone number or e-mail address of the photographer on a memory

device and presenting the phone number or e-mail address to the photofinisher to retrieve the photofinishing order.

22. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of writing a phone number or e-mail address of the photographer on a photofinishing envelope and presenting the phone number or e-mail address to the photofinisher to retrieve the photofinishing order.

23. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of erasing the digital images from the memory device include writing a test pattern onto the memory device.

24. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device includes a prerecorded image.

25. The method claimed in claim 24, wherein the prerecorded image contains instructions to a user for using the photofinishing services.

26. The method claimed in claim 24, further comprising the step of selling advertising space in the prerecorded image.

27. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the memory device bears a code in a hidden file or psuedo bad sector of the memory that indicates to the photofinisher that the memory device carries with it the commitment to create prints.

28. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of the photofinisher producing an index print and CD of the digital images from the memory device and returning the index print and CD to the photographer, and indicating with at least one index image the filename of the corresponding image file recorded on the CD.

29. The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of the photofinisher producing at least one print and a CD of the digital images from the memory device and returning the at least one print and CD to the photographer, and indicating on the at least one print the filename of the corresponding image file recorded on the CD.